



Assessment of Facilities and Process of Office Technology and Management Curriculum Implementation in Public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria

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Abstract

The study evaluates Office Technology and Management Programme in public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria. Specifically, the study had two objectives, two research questions and two null hypotheses. Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study was 962 and the entire population was used for the study. Therefore, there was no sampling of the population. The instrument for data collection was questionnaire and performance test. The instrument was validated by 3 experts. Trial test was conducted at The Ibadan Polytechnic and Akwa-Ibom State Polytechnic, Ikot Osurua, with Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.96 obtained. The data were collected by the researcher with the help of six research assistants. Data collected from the study were subjected to statistical analysis using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), 25. Average means were calculated for answering the Research Question and t-test was employed to test null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed, among others that the extent to which the facilities and process of the curriculum implementation was low. The study concluded that OTM students in public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria might graduate without acquiring the requisite skills and competencies for effective management of automated office. It was recommended among others that government and regulatory body (National Board for Technical Education) should provide facilities needed for effective implementation of OTM curriculum in public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria.

Keywords: Assessment, Facilities, Process, Implementation, Office Technology and Management.

Introduction

The new name for Secretarial Studies is Office Technology and Management, used for training secretaries in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Secretarial profession came into being from time immemorial; and like other professions, it has gone through changes because of technological



revolution. The essence of designing OTM curriculum was designed to prepare students with vocational skills in the programme and socio-psychological competence expected for office management, (Ezeani, 2012). The objectives of OTM according to Udo (2014) and Fwah, Umar, Moses & Musa (2021), is to specifically prepare students with the knowledge, competencies and skills to effectively hold positions as administrative assistants, secretaries, managers, administrative assistants in public and private sectors. It also aimed at developing the knowledge that will prepare students to be able to adapt to changing situations in the business world; and develop their potentials for further academic and professional pursuits, (Ikelegbe & Odede, 2012 and Nnaji & Bagudu, 2012). After graduation, it is hoped that students will be prepared for job opportunities and improvement for those who are already employed (Akintayo, 2014 & Aneasoba, 2016).

The government through the regulatory body - National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) - emphasizes on Computer and Computer related course in the programme. This indicates that for students to be effective and productive in the course of training, must be ready to learn computer related courses. Apagu, and Bala, (2015) and Kwaya (2017) said, the aim of OTM programme is to prepare the students to be self-reliant after graduation, especially with the daily increase in unemployment in the society, and also meet the needs of serving office managers on the need to change approach, in order to cope with the challenges of the era. Six modules make up the OTM curriculum, they are: (1) Office Technology, (2) Office Application (3) Business and Administrative Management (4) Numeric Component (5) General Studies and (6) Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES). It is designed to give in-depth administrative office work training to meet the demands and challenges in the business atmosphere, (Ayelotan & Sholagbade, 2014).

As a matter of necessity, the introduction of OTM programme came with the need for modern facilities in order to train office managers to meet up with the challenges in the world of technology. Fwah *et-al* (2021) noted that a lot of the facilities essential for training of office manager are lacking, obsolete and sometimes inadequate in some institutions. Fwah *et-al* (2021) further observed that the 21st century teaching and learning process requires facilities like computer, scanners, photocopiers, internet facilities and computer projectors to use in teaching and learning; couple with the fact that these are the facilities the office manager uses in the office for his regular tasks. Acquiring the facilities for teaching and learning is not enough but the process of imparting the desired knowledge is another thing, which is essential. The process (methodology) for teaching should succeed in the knowledge delivery, (Akintoye, 2014). Enock & Okata (2021) observed that some lecturers have not acquired new and special skills, the teaching methodology has not changed from the old system, adequate and appropriate facilities are yet to be acquired. Value system in favour certificate acquisition as against practical demonstration and ability is still in practice despite the review of the curriculum of the programme from 2004.



Similarly, Adeshina (2013) stated that the knowledge of office skills by the OTM lecturers, inadequate fund for the programme by the Polytechnics administrators as well as challenges are surmountable if appropriate measures are taken by those concerns to do so. Study of Ameasoba & Nweke (2016) disclosed that facilities are inadequate in Polytechnics running OTM. The major challenges that hamper the acquisition of skills which include inadequate infrastructures, adequate classrooms, poor or lack laboratory equipment, inadequate teaching and learning resources, (Adeshina, 2013 & Amesi and Giami, 2018).

Despite oil wealth, Nigeria is faced with a many of problems, which stand against development. Unemployment is one of the difficulties that face every developing economy in this twenty-first century, of which Nigeria is not exempted. As defined by Okoye and Iro, (2018) unemployment is a situation in which people who are ready and eager to work at the prevailing wage rate are not able to acquire work to do. Akarahu & Buba, (2011) and Adeshina, (2013) explained unemployed as a group of people who are economically active, but are without work but available for and seeking for work, including people who have lost their jobs and those who have voluntarily left work. National Bureau of statistic (2017-2018) reported that unemployment rate is at increasing rate, (Surajo and Karim, 2016 and National Bureau for Statistics, 2018).

It has been observed that despite the introduction of OTM programme in Polytechnics in Nigeria, the problem of poor performance at work, students' poor performance and graduate unemployment is still existing among Polytechnic OTM graduates . The above suggest calls for curriculum assessment of the programme.

Statement of the Problem

The issue of unemployed OTM Polytechnic graduates has resulted to questioning whether the redesigned curriculum has been able to achieve the planned objective of providing skills in Polytechnic students. NBTE has been appreciated for the introduction of OTM programme, but it seems more needs to be done, because despite this, some are still either employed or self-employed. Amiaya & Ramor, (2015) observed that the enthusiasm and energy generated at the introduction of OTM programme have decreased as an expectation as polytechnics graduates unemployment is disturbing. The introduction of OTM programme has not solved the problem of graduates' unemployment in the country as anticipated. This is a sign that the aims and objectives of the programme seems not been achieved satisfactorily.

In a study conducted by Akinyemi, Ofem & Kkuwenomore (2012) and Ezeani (2012), it was revealed that some Nigerian graduates (Polytechnic inclusive) annually find it challenging to secure employment. Similarly, it is likely that graduates of tertiary institutions who are not employed and had studied OTM with the aim of building a zealous occupation have been on the increase. These contentions motivated the researcher to evaluate the OTM Programme in public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria.



Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to evaluate Office Technology and Management programme in Northern Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

1. Find out the extent to which Polytechnics have needed facilities for implementation of the curriculum of OTM programme in Northern Nigeria.
2. Assess the extent to which the process of OTM curriculum implementation provides students with office management skills in Public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions will guide the study:

1. To what extent does Public Polytechnics have needed facilities for implementation of the curriculum of OTM programme in Northern Nigeria?
2. To what extent does the process of OTM curriculum implementation provides students with office management skills in Public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

The following Null hypotheses were postulated for the study and tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

H0₁: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of academic staff and serving student secretaries on the extent institutions have need facilities for implementation of the curriculum of OTM programme in Public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria.

H0₂: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of academic staff and serving secretaries on the extent the process of OTM curriculum implementation provides students with office management skills in Public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria.

Methodology

The research designed adopted was a descriptive survey. Descriptive survey is concerned with conditions relationship that exist, opinion that are held, processes that are going on, with the preset, although it often considers past events and influences as they relate to current conditions, Best & Kahn (2014). For Okeke *et-al*, (2014) it is used where a group of items or persons are used for study through gathering and analyzing data from the items or persons, representing the population. The choice of survey design agrees with the opinion of Uzoagulu (2011), who said that the design can be adopted when the study involved collection, analysis and interpretation of the opinion of the respondents on the matter under study. Therefore, the researcher saw the design as appropriate for the study since it used questionnaire to have the opinion of the respondents, and generalized the results and findings of the study. The population of the study was made up of 248 academic staff and 714 serving secretaries who have undergone HND II. The questionnaires were administered with the support Heads of the Department of the various institutions, who served as



research assistants. Total Population Sample (TPS) was used for the study, this is because of the size of the population. TPS means using the whole population that has one or more shared characteristics for research work (Crossman, 2018). This is based on Glenn (2009) who recommended that a precision level of ±3% for population of ≤1,000, the entire population can be used for the study.

Reliability test was conducted to analyze the internal consistency of the response received against every item and they were found satisfactory. Nunally (1994), reported that the basis research required a reliability score of .08> the instrument is considered to be reliable. The data obtained from the test was analyzed using Cronbach’s Alpha. Mean and Standard Deviation was used to answer the research questions and t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 degree of freedom. With the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), all data were analyzed. The decision rule is as follows: Any Mean score within the range of 3.5-4.00 (Very High Extent), 2.5-3.49 (High Extent), 1.5-2.49 (Low Extent) and 0.5-1.49 (Very Low Extent). The decision for accepting a null hypothesis was that if p> .05 there is no significant relationship, which means that the hypothesis was accepted, but if p< .05, there is significant relation, which implies that the hypothesis was rejected.

Results

Research Questions 1: To what extent are needed Facilities available for implementation of the curriculum of OTM programme in Public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean statistics of the extent to Public Polytechnics in have need Facilities for implementation of the curriculum of OTM programme in Northern Nigeria.

S/N	Items	Mean Scores			Remarks
		OTMLs	SSs	\bar{X}_y	
1	To what extent does the authority provide facilities needed for better understanding of OTM programme?	2.17	2.13	2.15	LE
2	To what extent to do the facilities used appropriate to the needed to achieve OTM course objectives?	2.53	2.01	2.27	LE
3	To what extent do the facilities provided the needed to help in passing exams?	1.91	2.51	2.21	LE



4	To what does the number facilities agree with the hours allotted for effective use of facilities for OTM programme?	2.31	1.81	2.06	LE
5	To what extent is the OTM Language laboratory available to take care of the needed diversity of nature of OTM programme?	1.74	1.61	1.68	LE
6	To what extent is the OTM ICT laboratory available to meet the needed diversity nature of OTM programme?	1.99	1.52	1.76	LE
7	To what extent is the OTM Typewriting Studio available to meet the needed diversity of the nature of OTM programme?	2.52	2.48	2.50	HE
8	To what extent is the OTM Model Office available to meet the needed diversity of nature of OTM programme?	2.31	2.63	2.47	LE
9	To what extent are OTM classrooms available to meet the needed diversity of nature of OTM programme?	2.07	2.23	2.15	LE
Grand mean		2.17	2.01	2.14	LE

Source: Fieldwork, 2021

The analysis of the data as revealed in Table 1 disclosed the items mean scores ranges from 1.74 (LE) to 2.53 (HE) with the cluster grand mean of 2.17 (LE) for the OTM lecturers. The item means of the serving secretaries ranges from 1.61 (LE) to 2.50 (HE) with the cluster grand mean of 2.10 (LE). The weighted items mean scores ranges from 1.68 (LE) to 2.50 (HE) with the grand mean score of 2.14 (LE). The grand mean score of 2.14 suggested that the extent to which Public Polytechnics have needed facilities for implementation of the curriculum of OTM programme in Northern Nigeria was low.

Research Questions 2: To what extent does the Process of OTM curriculum implementation provides students with office management skills in Public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria?



Table 2: Mean statistics of the extent to which process of OTM curriculum implementation provides students with office management skills in Public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria

S/N	Items	Mean Scores			Remarks
		OTMLs	SSs	\bar{X}_y	
1	My assessment of effectiveness actions to stimulate interest of students.	2.37	1.99	2.18	LE
2	My assessment of methods of delivery used create interest in OTM programme.	2.44	2.01	2.23	LE
3	My assessment of appropriateness of methods of delivery to increase self-confidence in the programme.	2.61	2.22	2.42	LE
4	My assessment of methods of delivery focusing on learning than teaching.	2.42	2.33	2.38	LE
5	My assessment of teaching process focusing on interacting directly with the problems of learners to make their own contribution	2.93	1.87	2.40	LE
6	My assessment of experiential learning such as organizing visits to industries in aiding students to gain more knowledge, skills and experience on certain topics.	1.99	1.78	1.89	LE
7	My assessment of video clips to serve as motivator to provide needed skills for Office Management.	2.52	1.43	1.98	LE
8	My assessment of traditional lecturer methods used in OTM programme.	2.51	2.02	2.27	LE
9	My assessment of how SIWES help in putting into practice those things learnt in the class.	2.63	1.11	1.87	LE



10	My assessment of how the one year Industrial training exposed you to practical working situation.	2.43	1.48	1.96	LE
11	My assessment of how marked scripts returned with corrective measures suggested in areas of lapses.	2.54	1.37	1.96	LE
12	My assessment of how adequacy of feedbacks given on performance in tests.	2.51	2.53	2.52	HE
13	My assessment of how adequacy of feedbacks given on performance in assignments.	2.52	1.09	1.81	LE
14	My assessment of how assessment of performance based on class presentation.	1.99	2.01	2.00	LE
15	My assessment of how criteria set before presentations, written tests and examinations.	2.52	1.12	1.82	LE
16	My assessment of 75% attendance criteria as tool for assessing performance.	2.45	1.21	1.83	LE
17	My assessment of how scores stand as true reflection of performance.	2.63	1.25	1.94	LE
18	My assessment of how the one year Industrial training exposed you to practical working situation.	2.42	2.15	2.29	LE
19	My assessment of how marked scripts returned with corrective measures suggested in areas of lapses.	2.53	1.27	1.90	LE
20	My assessment of adequacy of feedbacks given on performance in the presentations.	2.54	1.31	1.93	LE
Grand mean		2.48	1.68	2.08	LE

Source: Fieldwork, 2021



The descriptive statistics used to determine the extent to which the process of curriculum implementation provide the OTM students with office management skills is as presented in Table 2. The table shows items mean scores for the OTM lecturers ranges from 1.99 (LE) to 2.93 (HE) with the grand mean of 2.48 (LE). The lowest items mean scores for the serving secretaries was 1.09 (LE) and the highest was 2.53 (HE) with grand mean of 1.68 (LE). The weighted items mean scores for the two groups of the students ranges from 1.81 (LE) to 2.52 (HE) with the grand mean score of 2.08 which was found to be under the scale of low extent. The grand mean score obtained (2.08) suggested that the extent to which the Process of OTM curriculum implementation provides students with office management skills in Public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria was low.

Tests of Hypotheses

Null Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of academic staff and serving student secretaries on the extent institutions have need Facilities for implementation of the curriculum of OTM programme in Public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria.

Table 3: Mean difference on responses of academic staff and serving secretaries on the extent to which OTM programme has needed Facilities for curriculum implementation in Public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria.

Groups	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-value	p-value	Remarks
Staff	202	2.1	.84	774	2.3	.208	Retained
Secretaries	544	2.0	.83				

Source: Fieldwork, 2021

The outcome of the *independent-samples t-test* in Table 3 indicates the mean responses of Academic Staff (M = 2.173, SD = .843), and secretaries stood at 2.011 (.839) at degree of freedom of 744. The $t=2.344$ and $p=.208$ which was greater than 0.05 level of significance. The obtained result shows that there was no significant difference in the mean responses of academic staff and serving secretaries on the extent to which OTM programme has needed Facilities for curriculum implementation in Northern. The null hypothesis was retained

Null Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of academic staff and serving secretaries on the extent to which the Process of OTM curriculum implementation provides students with office management skills in Public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria.

Table 4: Mean difference between the responses of academic staff and serving secretaries on the extent to which the curriculum implementation Process provides OTM students with office management skills

Groups	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p-value	Remarks
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Staff	202	2.4	.755				Rejected
				744	-13.2	.008	
Students	544	1.6	.66199				

Source: Fieldwork, 2021

Table 4 above shows the mean difference between academic staff and serving secretaries on the extent to which curriculum implementation Process. The result on the test of null two revealed the mean responses of 2.478 with standard deviation of .755 for academic staff. It observed that serving secretaries had mean of 1.678 with standard deviation of .662 and degree of freedom of 744. The t-value stood at -13.274 and $p=.008$ which was less than the alpha value of 0.05. The result suggested that there was significant difference in the mean academic staff and serving secretaries on the extent to which the Process curriculum implementation provides OTM students with skills for office Management in Northern Nigeria. The null hypothesis was rejected.

Summary of the Findings

The summary of the findings is as follows:

The result of research question one shows that the extent to which institutions have need Facilities for implementation of the curriculum of OTM programme in Public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria was low. No significant difference exists between the mean responses of Office Technology and Management Lecturers (OTMLs) and Serving Students Secretaries (SSSs) on the facilities for implementation.

The result of research question two shows that the Process of OTM curriculum implementation provides students with office management skills in Northern Nigeria was low. The test of corresponding null hypothesis five shows that there was significant difference between the mean responses of OTM lecturers and that of serving secretaries undergoing HND programme in Northern Nigeria.

Discussion

The result of research question four shows that the extent to which institutions have need facilities for implementation of the curriculum of OTM programme in Public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria was low. No significant difference exists between the mean responses of OTMLs and SSs on the facilities for implementation. The study of Akpan and Etor (2013) which reported that the problem associated with Polytechnics in Nigeria is inadequate fund to buy instructional materials for effective teaching. Agomuo and Enang (2013) also revealed that funding of Public Polytechnics is far under expectation, which brought about poor provision of training facilities and subsequently scarcity of business teachers. Office Technology and Management is capital intensive. Study conducted by Ayolotan and Sholagbade (2014) also showed that physical facilities are inadequate in Polytechnics running OTM.



The study revealed that equipment needed for the effective teaching and learning are mostly not available and even the few available ones are grossly inadequate. The study of Emeasoba (2015) on evaluation of equipment for teaching and learning of business studies in Public Junior Secondary Schools in Enugu State.

Managements in Nigerian Polytechnics is good for theoretical knowledge but the government still needs to do more in providing enabling environment and other factors that may be needed to translate the theoretical knowledge to practical endeavor (Apagu, & Bala 2014). Similarly, the study of Amesi and Giami (2018) listed the major challenges that hinder the acquisition of skills which include inadequate infrastructures, adequate class-rooms, laboratory equipment, inadequate teaching and learning resources.

The result of research on the process of OTM curriculum implementation to provide students with office management skills in Northern Nigeria was low. The test of corresponding null hypothesis two shows that there was significant difference between the mean responses of OTM lecturers and that of serving secretaries undergoing HND programme in Public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria. The finding is in line with that of Fwa (2021) whose study reported that most students were pleased with the new version of the course but are dissatisfied with the method of teaching.

The study also disclosed that proper attention is not given towards implementation of educational programme. The finding also agrees with that of Akintayo (2014), which reported that the major problem affecting the realization of OTM programme in Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria is the process of curriculum implementation. The study further disclosed that in the implementation of the course, teachers focused more on theoretical work and rote learning, which put pressure on students and had a negative effect on their intellectual abilities. The finding agrees with Enock & Okata, (2021), who reported that the pedagogical approach used for teaching OTM does not encourage learning, thus making performance of students poor.

Conclusion

The study evaluates Office Technology and Management programme in public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria using the CIPP approach. The study was informed by the increasing rising in the problem of unemployment and skills gap among the OTM graduates in Northern Nigeria. From the results of the study, it was discovered that there are problems associated with facilities and process of curriculum implementation hampered the adequate realization of the objectives of OTM programme as stipulated by NBTE. The aforementioned challenges hampered the realization of laudable objective of OTM programme of providing students with office management skills. Based on this, it was concluded that the graduates of OTM programme with will be found wanting in office operation because they will not be able to operation the facilities and equipment in the technological compliance office. Consequently, the skills gap with increase the rate of unemployment among the graduates.



Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that:

1. For effective implementation of OTM curriculum in public polytechnics in Northern Nigeria, the regulatory body (National Board for Technical Education) should request the Federal and state government to provide needed facilities such as computers laboratories, computers, internet modem, digital cameras, modern photocopiers, electric typewriters among others for teaching and learning.
2. OTM lecturers in public Polytechnics in Northern Nigeria should integrate theoretical and practical approaches in teaching their students. This will enable students acquire the requisite knowledge and skills for office management.

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